



Besty Haas from Vanderblit, Fayette County, took the Berlin Community Fair by storm with her numerous entries. She was an oft-titled "premier exhibitor." Here she is shown in the floral department which she had entered for the first time and ended up with the most premium money.

Community Pride Runs High At Berlin Community Fair

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Somerset Co. Correspondent

BERLIN (Somerset Co.)—The Berlin Community Fair, held recently for the 59th time is an event in which community pride is in strong evidence.

That's because, after all this time, the far-reaching fair has long-since drawn hundreds of participants who claim no other attachment to the community, and because its enduring success is shared by the Brothersvalley School District.

Started in 1937 by the district agriculture students, under advisor, Bill Igoe, the fair was eventually expanded to welcome those folks who lived outside the borders of the school district.

It also became a member of the Pennsylvania State Association of County Fairs and receives state reimbursement for the premiums it pays — this year \$5,618.

Doyle Paul, the current Berlin-Brothersvalley FFA advisor who, for 27 years has presided over the organizational end, says there is excellent cooperation between the fair association and the school district.

Classes are held as usual when the ag students prepare the big gymnasium for perhaps, 3,000-plus entries, arranged skillfully, on the covered tiers of bleachers, tables and so forth.

For instance, the vegetable department this year recorded an impressive 537 entries for which the premiums paid amounted to \$622.50. It was one of 23 departments.

Later, premium cards, check writing, and running the balances were ideal experiences for students enrolled in the business education curriculum.

"It's a community activity that allows residents to participate in an activity of the school districts while students are attending classes," said Paul. "It's still a very normal day for our children."

More than that, the free, four-day event is a very attractive place for social interaction, especially for senior citizens who want very much to be a part of things.

Barbara Kerschensteiner is such a person. She's missed the fair only three times in her life. After being widowed earlier, Barbara was married to Philip Kers-

chensteiner some six years ago.

She won't miss the Berlin Community Fair. It's in her blood. She, herself was graduated from the Berlin high school, as were her sons and now, her grandsons.

A big smile on her face, more than anything else, spoke volumes about community pride, as Philip guided her through the aisles on a wheelchair.

Scores of flowers and plants, needle and handcrafted items, photographic entries and baked goods that were sold one evening by auctioneer Merle Mishler, along with separate departments for the youth, were all of interest to Barbara.

There were also seeds and grains, quilts and rugs and all manner of creative artwork.

Pets were allowed a parade of their own, outside near the ag complex and the chickens and rabbit entries were housed away from the main school building.

Friday night the large tractor pull was scheduled and Saturday there was a lawn and garden tractor pull, pedal power for youngsters and an A.T.V. pull.

Some 30 persons serve a rotating membership on the board of directors, along with the teacher of vocational agriculture and the aide, two members of the district board of education that are appointed by the school board, and two faculty members.

Their goal is to continue the purpose of the Berlin Community Fair, as in its by-laws ... "encourage a spirit of cooperation ... create interest in improved methods of farming ... nurture a love for farm life and those things that pertain to agriculture and homemaking ..."

There are no gambling games or devices to detract from the wholesome atmosphere of the celebration.

Cleanup is done by the ag students who lug the stuff that needs to be stored and apply themselves to restoring the former order of all the buildings.



Donald and Edna Delst from Glencoe, Somerset Co. are enjoying the large vegetable display set up on bleachers last weekend at the Berlin Community Fair.

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